



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 17, 2003

Shana Jones, Special Assistant  
Daryl Fields, Public Affairs Officer  
610 N.W. Loop 410  
San Antonio, Texas 78216  
(210) 384-7440

**– MEDIA ADVISORY –  
RUBEN VALDES SENTENCING**

**DATE: TOMORROW, June 18, 2003**

**TIME: 8:30AM**

**LOCATION: United States Courthouse  
U.S. District Judge Phillip Martinez' courtroom  
511 East San Antonio Street  
El Paso, Texas**

Ruben Valdes is scheduled to be sentenced tomorrow morning by U.S. District Judge Phillip Martinez. Valdes faces up to life in federal prison after a federal jury convicted him on April 17, 2003, of one count of Conspiracy to Smuggle Aliens for Commercial Advantage and Private Financial Gain and one substantive count of Alien Smuggling for Commercial Advantage and Private Financial Gain. Valdes and his brother, Roman Martin Valdes, were the leaders of a major alien smuggling organization, operating in Mexico and the United States. Evidence presented at trial revealed that the brothers recruited American truck drivers from bars and clubs in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico to use their commercial vehicles, usually tractor-trailers, to transport aliens from El Paso, Texas, to various locations throughout the United States. The brothers organized the smuggling of at least one to five loads of illegal aliens per week, each load containing between five to one hundred aliens between early 1999 and mid 2002. On July 27, 2002, a load of aliens was illegally transported by the Valdes alien smuggling organization, from El Paso, Texas to Dallas, Texas. When the tractor trailer holding the aliens stopped in Dallas County, Texas, the truck driver discovered that two of the aliens were dead and several others were in critical condition as a result of the inhumane conditions in the tractor trailer.

Johnny Sutton, United States Attorney / Western District of Texas, Anne Estrada, Deputy Special Agent in Charge / Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE) and Luis Barker, Chief Patrol Agent / El Paso Sector of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (BCBP) will be available for comments outside the courthouse following the sentencing.

Roman Valdes, who pled guilty on April 11, 2003, to Count I—Conspiracy to Smuggle Aliens, faces up to eight years in federal prison. He is scheduled for sentencing at 8:00am on Thursday before Judge Martinez.

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